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SIPDIS

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DEPT PASS USAID TO LAC/RSD, LAC/SAM, G/ENV, PPC/ENV
TREASURY FOR USED IBRD AND IDB AND INTL/MDB
USDA FOR FOREST SERVICE: LIZ MAHEW
INTERIOR FOR DIR INT AFFAIRS: K WASHBURN
INTERIOR FOR FWS: TOM RILEY
INTERIOR FOR NPS: JONATHAN PUTNAM
INTERIOR PASS USGS FOR INTERNATIONAL: J WEAVER
JUSTICE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES: JWEBB
EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL: CAM HILL-MACON
USDA FOR ARS/INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH: G FLANLEY
NSF FOR INTERNATIONAL: HAROLD STOLBERG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [TBIO](#) [ECON](#) [SOCI](#) [XR](#) [BR](#)
SUBJECT: SOUTH AMERICA ESTH NEWS, NUMBER 101

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1. The following is the one-hundred-first in a series of newsletters, published by the Brasilia Regional Environmental Hub, covering environment, science and technology, and health news in South America. The information below was gathered from news sources from across the region, and the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Hub office or our constituent posts. Addressees who would like to receive a user-friendly email version of this newsletter should contact Larissa Stoner at stonerla@state.gov. The e-mail version also contains a calendar of

upcoming ESTH events in the region. NOTE: THE NEWSLETTER IS NOW ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE BRASILIA INTRANET PAGE, BY CLICKING ON THE 'HUB' LINK.

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Forests

[13. New World Bank Facility Would Help Against Forest Degrading](#)

OCT. 22, 2007 - The World Bank is working to develop the new fund that would pay developing countries hundreds of millions of dollars for protecting and replanting tropical forests which store huge amounts of carbon and thereby fight climate change. The fund is called the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and is part of the UN climate change negotiations in Bali in December. The facility will provide financial incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation unlike the Kyoto Protocol which offers credits for replanting destroyed forests. The fund will initially have US\$300M to finance emissions reduction and to help prepare countries with

the necessary tools to monitor forests. According to a Reuters

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article, the proposed facility has already attracted interest from more than a dozen developing countries, including Indonesia, Brazil and several in Africa's Congo River Basin. The World Bank expects to first test the mechanism in three to five countries. Part of the testing involves providing participating countries with the means to prove they are reducing rates of deforestation and those countries will have to prove that they are reducing deforestation.

Source - Stabroeknews

14. Brazilian Police Dismantle Gang That Smuggled Endangered Wood to United States

OCT. 18, 2007 - Brazilian police launched an operation in six states to dismantle a gang alleged to have illegally cut down and exported to the United States a rare wood commonly used to make musical instruments. Some 350 federal officers, backed by state police and government environmental agents, arrested 23 people and were searching for two others, police inspector Tatiana Torres said from the southeastern city of Belo Horizonte. The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service's Northeast Region Office of Law Enforcement said it carried out a search in central Massachusetts but gave no details. Federal Brazilian police also began serving 67 search and seizure warrants for the illegal extraction of Brazilian rosewood, an endangered tree species that is native to and found only in eastern Brazil.

Source - The Associated Press

15. Amazon Loggers Hold Greenpeace Activists Captive

OCT. 18, 2007 - Brazilian loggers besieged eight Greenpeace activists on October 17 in a remote Amazon town, angered by a campaign against global warming that they fear could hurt their image. Hundreds of townspeople, including dozens of loggers in trucks, cars and motorcycles, blockaded the activists in a local branch of the government's environmental protection agency Ibama, a Greenpeace spokesman said. The incident, the second time in nearly two months that Greenpeace activists have been harassed in the Amazon jungle, underscores the often violent conflicts over natural resources between farmers and loggers on one hand and peasants and Indians on the other.

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Source - Reuters (no link)

16. Guyana: Government Cites Companies over Breaches of Forestry Procedures

OCT. 09, 2007 - [Guyana's] President Bharrat Jagdeo disclosed that recent alleged breaches of forestry procedures involve collusion between Barama Company Limited, some concessionaires and staffers at the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC). It is the first time that the name of a logging company has been mentioned publicly since a probe was launched into the fraud. Jagdeo warned that there will be consequences for the company and the other parties, noting that based upon preliminary investigations it seems as though there was a system among the three groups to defraud the government. Contacted for a comment last evening, Girwar Lalram, Chairman of Barama said it was premature for his organization to make a comment on the issue at this time.

Source - Stabroeknews

17. Fires Burning Across Brazil Put Biodiversity at Risk

OCT. 8, 2007 - Severe drought has been identified as the main cause of the fire that consumed three hectares of the Macico da Pedra Branca forest in Rio de Janeiro state in one September day. In that same week, 170 other fire points were seen along the forests and conservation parks of the state of Rio de Janeiro. Fire officials

said lack of environmental responsibility is to blame for these fires, many of them caused by human beings. Local plant biodiversity and animal habitats have been damaged, although no human injuries were reported, this despite the lack of resources from the state fire brigade that pressed their two helicopters to the maximum, as their one and only fireplane was broken. Hundreds of miles away, fire crews fought to save a region of native forest in Sao Paulo and parts of the Parque Nacional da Ilha Grande, on the borders of the states of Parana and Mato Grosso. In that region, no rain has fallen for two months and not even helicopters are available to fight the 10 fires that have broken out there this year. In the Pantanal wetlands in west-central Brazil, more than 150,000 hectares have burned without remedy. The inhabitants of nearby towns have had difficulty breathing because of the thick smoke.

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Source - Environmental News Service

Wildlife

18. Guyana: Spain to Fund Aquarium Upgrade In Exchange For Manatees

OCT. 17, 2007 - A pair of manatees was exported to Spain under an agreement that will provide funding for improvements to the aquarium to house the Arapaima exhibits at the Guyana Zoological Park. The manatees were exported through the [Guyana] National Parks Commission (NPC) and they will be used to increase the population and improve the genetic stock of this species at the Faunia Zoo in Madrid, and at other zoos in Europe. A similar agreement was finalized with the Odense Zoo in Denmark in 2001 as zoological parks around the world build partnerships to develop conservation and management programs to curb the decline of several endangered plant and animal species.

Source - Stabroeknews

19. Manatee Reintroduction Slated For Brazilian State of Amazonas

SEPT. 2007 - A trio of conservation entities has joined in an unprecedented effort to reintroduce Amazon manatees, an endangered species, into Brazil's rainforest rivers. Researchers plan to place two male members of the freshwater species (*Trichechus inunguis*) into a tributary of the Rio Negro next February. Manatee numbers in Brazil plunged in the period 1930-50, when hides from some 200,000 of the animals-known locally as "peixe bois" or "fish cows"-were turned into industrial belts here and abroad, often for sewing machines. Killing manatees for their pelts ended with the development in the 1950s of synthetic rubbers. But the animals face other threats, including habitat loss and death at the hands of Amazon hunters, who sell manatee meat to river dwellers.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

Protected Areas

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10. Brazil Congress Committee Considers Reducing Amazon Protections

OCT. 09, 2007 - Environmentalists expressed concern at legislation before congress they said could lead to the destruction of a California-sized chunk of Amazon rainforest. A congressional committee is considering legislation that would reduce the amount of forest landowners in the Amazon must leave standing as forest reserve. Under a 2001 executive decree, landowners in the Amazon may only clear-cut 20 percent of their land for pasture and planting and must maintain 80 percent standing as forest reserve. Many landowners say the restrictions hinder development in the poor Amazon region,

which covers nearly 60 percent of Brazilian territory. Rep. Jorge Khoury, the committee's co-chair, denied the hearing was the first step toward reducing the forest reserve. "This is just one more hearing to collect information and create a report to suggest changes to the law," Khoury said in a telephone interview. Nonetheless, environmentalists noted there are two separate projects before congress seeking to reduce the amount of required reserve to 50 percent from the current 80 percent.

Source - The Associated Press

11. Biosphere Created, Indian Lands Granted In Ecuador

OCT. 2007 - Green advocates applauded two conservation gains in Ecuador: the designation of the country's fourth biosphere reserve and the deeding of rainforest land to the nation's Shuar indigenous community. Granting official recognition to historic Shuar land claims, the government of Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa on Sept. 20 approved the titling of 17,000 acres (7,000 has) to three Shuar communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon-Yaupi, Achunts Mankusas and Chinkianas. Welcome as this news of the Shuar land-titling was to conservationists, the creation of Ecuador's fourth biosphere, also on Sept. 20, was the higher-profile development. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) extended biosphere status to a vast 2.82-million-acre (1.14-million-ha) swath of land encompassing Podocarpus National Park, the upper watershed of the Nangaritza River and the Csndor mountains, as well as territory of the Saraguro and Shuar Indians and two religious and tourism centers-El Cisne and Vilcabamba. The

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reserve, named Podocarpus-El Condor, is extraordinarily biodiverse owing to its location at the intersection of the Amazon watershed, the Andes and the Ecuadorian paramo.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

12. Argentina: Backlash Greets Wetland-Conservation Drive

SEPT. 2007 - Hoping to block conservation purchases in Argentina's Corrientes province, opponents of Former U.S. clothing entrepreneur Douglas Tompkins [Esprit] in June amended the provincial constitution. Using a constituent assembly convened primarily to address gubernatorial terms, they inserted a new article, 61, prohibiting foreigners and corporations controlled by them from buying lands "in security areas or in protected areas or [areas] that constitute strategic resources." Tompkins since the late 90s has been making a series of conservation purchases in the Esteros del Ibera, which feature vast expanses of marsh grasses dotted with lagoons and gallery forests. Increasingly, the Esteros del Ibera have come under pressure from farming and logging. Some experts say the wetlands' hydrology also is being affected by nearby Yacyreta, the Argentine-Paraguayan hydroelectric dam that in recent years has raised the water level of its reservoir to generate more power. Tompkins hopes to address the development pressures much as he has done in Chile, where his acquisitions led to the creation of Pumalin Park, a government-recognized nature sanctuary stretching from the Andes to the Pacific at the northern tip of Chilean Patagonia. He seeks to restore the lands environmentally and donate them to the national government on condition their protection be guaranteed, but his critics see darker motives. "Douglas Tompkins isn't a philanthropist, he's a liar who wants to use the ecology line to gain control of our resources. Though it must seem crazy, I believe Tompkins is installing a United States enclave in Argentina," says Araceli Ferreyra, a constituent assembly member who voted for the constitutional changes.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

13. Bolivian Settlers Push for Parkland Acreage

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SEPT. 2007 - Colonizers and residents looking to ease landholding and development restrictions in Bolivia's highly prized Madidi National Park are threatening to resume protests if the government doesn't give them what they want. Bolivia's government appears to be acceding to demands made during angry protests last May for a roadway and oil development in the park. But leaders of those demonstrations say another key demand-park acreage for farming, logging and ranching-has gone unmet. That could spell more trouble for Madidi, an extraordinarily biodiverse, 4.5-million-acre (1.8-million-ha) expanse in northwest Bolivia where Andean-mountain and Amazonian ecosystems merge. The government of Bolivian President Evo Morales initially reacted to the May protests with indignation and disbelief. Morales at one point said "drug traffickers and wood smugglers" were behind the demonstrations. He sent 400 soldiers and police to quell the unrest, then announced a military base would be built in Madidi to "preserve sovereignty and guarantee national integrity." In negotiations, however, the government has backed down, making it known to protest leaders that it would study the possibility of completing the Apolo-Ixiamas road, which was briefly under construction in 2002 though no environmental or technical studies had been done. The government also has agreed to conduct oil exploration in the park. Environmental groups worry government concessions could cause wholesale destruction in Madidi.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

Science & Technology

14. Brazil to Make 385-M-Dollar Bid for Orbit Concession

OCT. 23, 2007 - The Brazilian government is to bid 700 million reais (385 million U.S. dollars) for the concession of a space orbit strategic to South America. "We need that orbital position," said Helio Costa, Brazil's Minister of Telecommunications, in an interview with a local newspaper. Costa will have a meeting in Geneva, Switzerland with representatives from Colombia, Bolivia and Peru to solve the impasse concerning the concession of the so-called orbit 68. The exploitation of the orbit was conceded to the Andean

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countries seven years ago. However, according to the minister, they had to launch a satellite by Sept. 2007 in order to keep the concession, which they failed to accomplish. According to international rules on space exploration, other countries could bid for the orbit if the deadline expires. But Colombia, Peru and Bolivia are struggling for a time extension, which they claimed would allow them to launch their own satellite. Other countries have also demonstrated an interest in the orbit. In a partnership with Uruguay, Venezuela is seeking authorization from the ITU to launch into the orbit its first Simon Bolivar satellite, said the newspaper.

Source - English People

15. Activist, Guard Killed on Brazil Biofarm

OCT. 22, 2007 - Two people were shot dead when activists were confronted by armed men as they invaded a Swiss-owned farm that has been a flashpoint in the debate over biotech crops, authorities and the company said. A security guard and an activist were killed by gunfire at the research farm owned by Syngenta AG, a global company with a heavy focus on genetically modified seeds. While Brazil's national government allows use of genetically modified seeds for some crops, Parana's state government recently outlawed genetically modified corn and has tried repeatedly tried to shut down the Syngenta farm.

Source - The New York Times

16. U.S. restricts use of dual technology in Sino-Brazilian satellite

OCT. 22, 2007 - Story criticizes USG restrictions on the exportation of dual-use technologies by companies in the United States to Brazilian companies working in the Sino-Brazilian environmental remote imaging satellites CBERS 3 and 4. Story highlights that the "restrictions aren't directed specifically at Brazil, but rather at [China], a military power that is now also a space [power]," but calls the restrictions "Orwellian." In a sidebar, a short op-ed by National Space Research Institute (INPE) Director Gilberto Cmara says that, "Unfortunately, the positive [U.S.-Brazil] relations in the space area aren't reflected in the positions of the Department

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of State and in the U.S. legislation." According to the op-ed U.S. officials who are in charge of controlling sensitive technologies "have told Inpe that they know that the CBERS is a civilian program and that there is no technology transfer from Brazil to China. Even so, they say that U.S. legislation prohibits the exportation of space components to any program with Chinese participation." Another sidebar quotes U.S. Embassy Information Officer Richard Mei: "There is a very specific law for U.S. technology: no matter where it is going first. If there is a dual purpose, it is subject to this law, because its final destination would be China."

Source - Public Affairs US Embassy Brasilia. Original source - Folha de Sao Paulo

¶17. Telemedicine links Galapagos to mainland

OCT. 18, 2007 - The Equinoctial Technology University in Ecuador opened a telemedicine center that will use satellite connections to train medical staff and provide better healthcare in remote areas like the Galapagos Islands. The new center will also offer long-distance training for health staff and will eventually provide coverage nationally. The university has invested US\$250,000 in equipment, and the Ecuadorian air force has granted three hours of free satellite access a day, two for patient care and one for training, which will save the university around US\$10,000 a month. The project is supported by US-based University of New Mexico.

Source - SciDev

¶18. Solid Waste Management & Pollution Regional Concern about Pesticides on Rise

OCT. 2007 - Experts say that as pesticide use increases in a region scrambling to tap world agricultural markets [i.e. Latin America], toxic chemicals often are being used without proper controls, endangering millions of farm workers. At the same time, they contend, government pesticide regulations-where they exist-often go unenforced. According to health researchers the results of increasing pesticide use are demonstrated by the elevated odds of birth defects and developmental problems among the children of farm workers and a growing risk of skin disease, miscarriages, sterility

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and cancer among the workers themselves. Bolivia has Latin America's highest rate of growth for pesticide imports, which more than doubled over the past five years. Of those imports, an estimated 30% is contraband. Pesticide sales in Latin American countries are projected to reach a total of \$7.5 billion by 2009. Industry observers say the rapid growth is driven by expanding crop areas, new disease outbreaks and an increase in plantings of pesticide-tolerant genetically modified crops. In recent years, Brazil and Argentina in particular have experienced a huge surge in pesticide purchases.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

¶19. Brazil Tries to Break Solid-Waste Stalemate

OCT. 2007 - Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has sent

Congress a national solid-waste management bill, the first ever proposed by the executive branch, to break a years-long congressional stalemate on the issue. Though the bill appears to have won impressive early support from stakeholders and legislators, its deliberate lack of crucial details will likely prompt special-interest battling over implementation if the measure is enacted. The new bill represents an attempt to clear a stalemate that has left Brazil with no nationwide solid-waste-management rules aside from norms issued by an environmental regulatory body regarding disposal of used tires, batteries and construction waste. Since 1991, lawmakers have introduced nearly 100 solid-waste-management bills in Congress, but the measures typically founder amid opposition from industry groups. The new legislation addresses myriad problems including clogged and insufficient sanitary landfills, illegal dumping and burning of waste in open-air dump sites as well, as the country's low recycling rate.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

120. Smelter Fined In Peru for Air, Water Pollution

SEPT. 2007 - Doe Run Peru in August was fined US\$230,000 for environmental violations caused by its metals smelter in the Andean town of La Oroya in Peru's central Junn department. And on Aug. 31,

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the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ordered the Peruvian government to take steps to protect the health of residents of La Oroya, where repeated studies have found high blood lead levels, especially in children. Doe Run has been the target of protests since shortly after it bought the smelter from Peru's state-run mining company in 1997. Underlying them is concern over heavy-metals and sulfur-dioxide emissions at the smelter, which processes lead, copper and zinc. Carlos Rojas, regional executive secretary of the National Environment Council, Peru's top environmental authority, says the enforcement action underscores a need for greater community oversight and reporting of green issues.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

121. Santiago Battles to Put Anti-Smog Effort on Track

SEPT. 2007 - In one of the coldest winters to hit Chile in decades, smog over the months of May through August soared to its worst levels since 1999, triggering 22 environmental alerts and six official pre-emergencies. That roughly equals or exceeds the totals for each of the past six years. On May 12, the index used to track particulates in Santiago registered 409, well above the 301 level at which particulate contamination is considered "critical." The biggest factor in this year's severe smog was unusually dry winter weather brought on by La Nia, a periodic cooling of east-central equatorial Pacific Ocean waters that every few years drives down temperatures and rainfall here. Because Santiago is sandwiched between the Andes and the Cordillera de la Costa mountain range, air circulation is often blocked on especially dry days as a layer of warm air settles over the city and traps airborne contaminants below. But La Nia isn't the only cause of Santiago's bad air. Also contributing is an increase in automobile use-a reflection, in part, of the problems plaguing Transantiago, the capital's new public transportation system. And despite city-government calls on residents to cut back on the use of firewood for home heating, the request has fallen on deaf ears amid low winter temperatures and rising energy prices.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

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Energy

¶22. Brazil's Lula Signs Biofuels Deal in Congo

OCT. 18, 2007 - Brazil has signed two agreements with the Democratic Republic of Congo to provide the poor central African state with training, technology and financing to produce biofuels from sugar cane and palm oil. "We are ready to accompany the continent and we are willing to help those countries which want to follow Brazil's example: today we are self-sufficient in energy," [President] Lula told the news conference. Brazil's state oil company Petrobras expects ethanol sales at home, in Latin America's largest country, to beat gasoline consumption by around 2020. Africa produces a range of crops that could be used to make biofuels, including sugar cane, sugar beet, maize, sorghum and cassava -- all of which can be used to make ethanol -- and peanuts, whose oil can be used to power diesel engines.

Source - Reuters (no link)

¶23. Chile Approves Renewable Energy Bill

OCT. 16, 2007 - Chile's Chamber of Deputies unanimously approved an environmental bill focused on the development of unconventional renewable energy (ERNC). The bill aims to diversify the electrical industry and promote clean energies. The initiative mandates that electrical companies with a capacity greater than 200 megawatts (MW) - including Endesa, Colbun and Gener - must use unconventional renewable energy sources to generate at least five percent of their total production by 2010. This percentage will increase gradually until arriving at eight percent in 2024. The bill is aimed at forcing major companies to develop "unconventional" sources of energy, such as solar, geothermal, Aeolian (solar thermoelectric and photovoltaic), biomass (solid, liquid, and biogas) and hydraulic energy. Most environmental experts consider the proposal insufficient, especially "because in 2024 we will have greater financial and technical abilities in the renewable energy field."

Source - Santiago Times (no link)

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Climate Change

¶24. Climate Change Helps Spider Specimen Move to Magallanes Region

OCT. 21, 2007 - Climate change consequences in the entomologic field have reached Magallanes Region in the far south of Chile. Local authorities are now cautioning about the appearance of a small spider identified as the "false black widow", which can be lethal for people suffering different allergies. The scientific name of the specimen is Steatoda gross, and until recently the furthest south she had been found was in Osorno, a hundred kilometers north of Puerto Montt, an area not exposed to the extreme temperatures of Magallanes. According to Patagonia Institute biologist Eduardo Fagundez who has been researching the spider in Magallanes, the poison of the arachnid attacks the nervous system and thus is potentially dangerous for people who suffer from allergic reactions. Fagundez believes the false black widow reached the north of Punta Arenas sometime a year ago approximately.

Source- MercoPress

¶25. Latin America Proposes Solutions to Climate Change

OCT. 2007 - The over 1,500 representatives from Latin America who were present at the International Meeting on Climate change held in Ecuador October 15-18 presented a document to President Rafael Correa (Ecuador) with a series of proposals to deal with climate change. Among suggestions were: 1) define a new model for development in Latin America that is socially responsible and harmonic with nature; 2) elaborate policies for adaptation to climate change; 3) establish funding and technology transfer mechanisms for climate change adaptation and mitigation from developed to developing countries; 4) identify melting Andean

glaciers as a high environmental priority and fund appropriate research efforts; 5) strengthen climate observatory systems; 6) develop strategies for water management; and 7) establish payment mechanism from developed countries to developing countries for keeping their forests intact (avoided deforestation). A total of 21 proposals were suggested and are available in Spanish at www.sur.iucn.org.

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Source - IUCN

126. Argentine Environmental Negotiator Loses His Post

OCT. 2007 - Argentine diplomat Raul Estrada Oyuela, a much-praised protagonist in the talks that birthed the Kyoto climate-change agreement, was removed from his post as the Argentine Foreign Ministry's environmental-affairs representative September, two days after declaring that his country "has no environmental policy." Oyuela, who in 1997 presided over the international meeting that produced the Kyoto Protocol and was described by a U.S. negotiator as a "grandmaster of diplomacy and the godfather of Kyoto," made the remark during a Sept. 19 conference at the United Nations office in Buenos Aires. He also said Argentina urgently must adopt strategies aimed at adapting to climate change. Since his dismissal, Oyuela has continued to speak out. He recently faulted the national government for not intervening in controversies over huge mining projects slated for several Argentine provinces. And in the immediate aftermath of his firing he strongly defended his suggestion that Argentina lacks an environmental policy.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

127. As Glaciers Melt, So Does Climate Record

SEPT. 2007 - The Andes are topped by the largest concentration of ice anywhere in the Earth's tropics. While the melting of the tropical glaciers contributes little to global sea-level rise in comparison to the melting of ice in Greenland and Antarctica, the rapid retreat of Andean glaciers is threatening irrigation and drinking water supplies, hydroelectricity production and tourism. It also is erasing a valuable record of the planet's climatic history. In 1991, tropical Andean glaciers covered an estimated 1,065 square miles (2,758 sq kms), with 70% in Peru, 20% in Bolivia and the rest in Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela. Since then, glaciers have disappeared from Venezuela and are shrinking in the other countries. Figures from 2002 put the area at 962.6 square miles (2,493 sq kms), a loss of nearly 10% in just over a decade. To stay abreast of the changes, the Glaciology and Water Resources Unit of Peru's National Institute of Natural Resources (Inrena) in

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Huaraz currently is conducting a new nationwide glacier inventory. Among the points of particular interest will be the Santa River valley, known as the Callejon de Huaylas, which lies at the foot of the Cordillera Blanca. Because the question seems to be not if, but when such runoff reductions occur, Inrena's glacier inventory is aimed not just at mapping glacial retreat, but at determining how much fresh water remains in the country's mountain reserves and how long it can be expected to last.

Source - EcoAmericas (For complete article please contact Larissa Stoner)

General

128. Guyana: Grant Aid for Sustainable Forest, Gold Ops Signed

OCT. 24, 2007 - WWF Guyana launched the second phase of its regional environmental project entitled Guyanas Sustainable Natural Resources Management Project and signed four grant agreements in the total

amount of \$86.14M. The agencies receiving the grants were the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC), the Hydrometeorological Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC). The primary conservation focus of this project phase is on sustainable forest management, protected areas management, freshwater species conservation and gold mining pollution abatement in Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana.

Source - Stabroeknews

129. 'Unknown' Peru Amazon Tribe Seen

OCT. 04, 2007 - A previously unknown indigenous group living in isolation has been found deep in Peru's Amazon jungle, a team of ecologists has said. The ecologists spotted the 21 Indians near the Brazilian border as they flew overhead looking for illegal loggers. Contact with outsiders can be fatal for isolated tribes people who have no immunity to many diseases. Some groups have fled deep into the jungle to avoid contact with loggers and oil and gas prospectors. A pan-American human rights group criticized Peru's government this year for doing little to protect the groups from

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illegal loggers who are chopping down the mahogany-rich forests in which they live.

Source - BBC

130. Copper Project New Focus for Peru's Mine Debate

OCT. 2007 - Ro Blanco [in northern Peru's Piura region] is the site of the latest flashpoint in the battle over large-scale mining in Peru. [Mining company] Majaz proposes to create a US\$1.44 billion open-pit copper mine that would rank among the 20 largest copper mines in the world. Opponents worry that mining in Andean cloud forests here near the Ecuadorian border will reduce the flow of the region's rivers and pollute them with acid runoff. Supporters, however, argue only mining can help this impoverished border area, where most residents near the mine site are subsistence farmers or small-scale coffee growers. Legislation sent to Congress on September 21 by Peru's executive branch lists Ro Blanco among 20 mining projects of "national interest" that should receive preferential consideration. The Mining Company Majaz now must file an environmental impact assessment and renegotiate land-use rights with the communities of El Carmen de la Frontera and Segunda y Cajas. Local leaders say the company failed to get community approval for the exploratory phase, a claim supported by the government Ombudsman's Office last year.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

131. Argentina, Uruguay At Odds As Pulp Mill Nears Completion

SEPT. 2007 - Tension between Argentina and Uruguay is growing as a massive pulp mill Uruguay has allowed a Finnish company to build near the countries' common border nears completion. A source of cross-border angst during its planning and development stages, the complex has stoked new Argentine-Uruguayan tension as it prepares to start production. On Aug. 29, Uruguayan President Tabare Vazquez inaugurated the private port, which Botnia will use to export pulp to Europe and China. In a press statement, Argentina's Foreign Relations Ministry referred to the port-opening ceremony as "an aggravation of the controversy." It is unclear when production at the new plant will begin. After August's port inauguration, Botnia

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announced the start-up would take place in September, but Uruguay's top environmental official, Mariano Arana, said the government needed to receive information from Botnia before allowing the plant to go into operation.

Source - EcoAmericas (please contact Larissa Stoner for complete article)

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